

## **WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:**

1. A method of incentivizing future purchases by customers, said method comprising:

providing a promotional event at a provider of goods or services;  
providing an inactivated purchase card to a customer in association with said promotional event; and  
activating said purchase card at a future predetermined time.

2. The method of Claim 1, wherein said purchase card is provided to the customer only if the customer satisfies one or more predetermined criteria.

3. The method of Claim 1, wherein said future predetermined time is a predetermined duration after said inactivated purchase card is provided to the customer.

4. The method of Claim 1, wherein said future predetermined time is determined by the receipt of responses from the customer to survey questions.

5. The method of Claim 1, further comprising de-activating said purchase card at a second predetermined time that occurs after said future predetermined time.

6. The method of Claim 1, wherein said purchase card is activated to only allow the purchase of goods or services offered by said provider.

7. The method of Claim 1, wherein said purchase card is activated to only allow the purchase of goods or services associated with said promotional event.

8. A method of incentivizing future purchases by customers, said method comprising:

providing an inactivated purchase card to a customer;  
providing survey questions to the customer; and  
activating said purchase card in response to receiving responses from the customer to said survey questions.

9. The method of Claim 8, wherein said purchase card is provided to the customer only if the customer satisfies one or more predetermined criteria.

10. The method of Claim 8, wherein said purchase card is provided to the customer manually.

11. The method of Claim 8, wherein said purchase card is provided to the customer automatically.

12. The method of Claim 8, wherein said purchase card is provided to the customer in association with a promotional event at a provider of goods or services.

13. The method of Claim 12, wherein said purchase card is activated to only allow the purchase of goods or services offered by said provider.

14. The method of Claim 12, wherein said purchase card is activated to only allow the purchase of goods or services associated with said promotional event.

15. A method of incentivizing future purchases by customers, said method comprising:

- providing an inactivated purchase card to a customer, wherein said purchase card displays a telephone number to call to activate the card;

- receiving a telephone call from the customer at said telephone number;

- receiving from the customer during said telephone call a card identification number associated with said purchase card;

- providing to the customer during said telephone call one or more survey questions;

- receiving from the customer during said telephone call responses to said survey questions; and

- activating said purchase card with a predetermined value in response to receiving one or more responses from the customer to said survey questions.

16. The method of Claim 15, wherein said purchase card is provided to the customer only if the customer satisfies one or more predetermined criteria.

17. The method of Claim 15, wherein said purchase card is provided to the customer manually.

18. The method of Claim 15, wherein said purchase card is provided to the customer automatically.

19. The method of Claim 15, wherein said activating comprises providing the customer with a personal identification number associated with said purchase card.

20. The method of Claim 15, wherein said activating comprises applying a credit balance to said purchase card.

21. The method of Claim 19, further comprising disabling the personal identification number associated with said purchase card after a predetermined amount of time.

22. The method of Claim 20, further comprising setting to zero the credit balance associated with said purchase card after a predetermined amount of time.

23. The method of Claim 15, further comprising providing the customer with instructions to call said telephone number to activate said purchase card.

24. The method of Claim 15, wherein said survey questions are provided to the customer as prerecorded messages accessible at said telephone number.

25. The method of Claim 24, wherein said responses are received from the customer via an interactive voice response system accessible at said telephone number.

26. A method of incentivizing future purchases by customers, said method comprising:

providing an inactivated purchase card to a customer, wherein said purchase card displays a URL for an internet web site for the customer to visit to activate the card;

receiving a visit from the customer to said internet web site;

receiving from the customer during said visit a card identification number associated with said purchase card;

providing to the customer during said visit one or more survey questions;

receiving from the customer during said visit responses to said survey questions; and

activating said purchase card with a predetermined value in response to receiving one or more responses from the customer to said survey questions.

27. The method of Claim 26, wherein said purchase card is provided to the customer only if the customer satisfies one or more predetermined criteria.

28. The method of Claim 26, wherein said purchase card is provided to the customer manually.

29. The method of Claim 26, wherein said purchase card is provided to the customer automatically.

30. The method of Claim 26, wherein said activating comprises providing the customer with a personal identification number associated with said purchase card.

31. The method of Claim 26, wherein said activating comprises applying a credit balance to said purchase card.

32. The method of Claim 30, further comprising disabling the personal identification number associated with said purchase card after a predetermined amount of time.

33. The method of Claim 31, further comprising setting to zero the credit balance associated with said purchase card after a predetermined amount of time.

34. The method of Claim 26, further comprising providing the customer with instructions to visit said web site to activate said purchase card.

35. The method of Claim 26, wherein said survey questions are provided to the customer on one or more web pages associated with said web site.

36. The method of Claim 26, wherein said responses are received from the customer via user interfaces on one or more web pages associated with said web site.